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S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
Parish-Church of *Wendover*,
I N T H E
C O U N T Y of *BUCKS*,

• *August* the 7th, 1701.

• B E I N G

The First *Monthly Lecture* there,

B E F O R E T H E
S O C I E T Y
F O R

Reformation of Manners.

A N D

Now Publisht at their Request.

By *J O H N T A T E*, Rector
of *Great Hampden* in the said County.

L O N D O N:

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To the Right Reverend Father in God, *JAMES*,
by Divine Permission,
Lord Bishop of Lincoln.

My Lord,

Since it hath pleased Your Lordship to Grant us your Authority for a Publick Lecture at Wendover, in your Zeal to the Good Ends of our Society, I am required in the Name of it to offer this First-fruits to Your Lordship, as a grateful Acknowledgment of that your Favour to us.

I have the Charity to Believe, that our Society in imposing this unthought-of Publication on me, have no Design to expose my Weaknesses, which are observable enough in this Discourse: But I must assure Your Lordship, it is not the least Discouragement to it, that I see so many Excellent Discourses come Abroad upon the like Occasion, and this so short of them for Accuracy: But our Knowledge of Your Lordship's great Candour and Goodness, makes us hope it will be accepted, if it be but for its good meaning, though it shew so little of Intrinsick Worth. Such as

The Epistle Dedicatory.

it is I Present it to Your Lordship, and assure you, that in the Use of that Liberty Your Lordship hath given us, we shall never be encouragers or movers of any Faction or Schism, nor seek to distinguish our selves, by any ill Methods, from other our Brethren of the Clergy; but shall always live in Brotherly Love with them, though not of our Society, peaceably pursue our own professed Ends, and always endeavour to be found Obedient to your Fatherhood; not doubting we have Your Lordship's Prayers for the Blessing of God upon our Endeavours, to whose Mercy we humbly Commend Your Lordship, that he would long Preserve you in Health and Peace. I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's Obedient

Son and Servant,

John Tate.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in the
Parish-Church of *Wendover*,
IN THE
COUNTY of *BUCKS.*

I COR. XVI. 8, 9.

8. *But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.*

9. *For a great Door and Effectual is opened unto me, and there are many Adversaries.*

re. **W**HEN the Nation becomes Debauch'd, and Profaneness and Immorality grow Rampant, the Word Reformation hath then a grateful sound to the Ears of them that fear God, to them that Sigh and Mourn for the Wickedness of it, *Ezek.* 9. 4. It will be no small Joy to those that

Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness, to see a revival of the Practice of Piety in the Land; at least such a Reformation that Iniquity may stop her Mouth, *Psal.* 107. 42. It is a good Omen, that God hath raised the Spirits of good Men, in so many Places of the Land, for reforming their bad Neighbours, and that with so good Success. And it is a Door of good Hope of further Success, that not only our Gracious King and the Parliament to, have published Proclamations and good Acts for the suppressing Profaneness, &c. but that we have found that Zeal in several worthy Justices and other good Magistrates to execute them. And that nothing might be wanting to Us, our Reverend Diocesan hath now authorized our Society to have a Monthly Lecture, to give us Publick Opportunity to cry down the too common Immoralities and Prophaneness by the Word of God, which we have hitherto been, and still are forc'd to suppress by the Sword of the Magistrate. So that now *a greater Door and more Effectual is opened to us,* (if we have Hearts and Skill to use it) *though there be many Adversaries.* And now I come to the Words of the Text, and in them I shall observe three Things in order to Explication. 1. That a great Door and Effectual was opened to the Apostle

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stle at *Ephesus*. 2. That he would tarry there and attend it. 3. And that because, or though, there were many Adversaries. All this refers to the Story of St. *Paul* in *Acts*, Chap. 18, 19, and 20.

1. *A great Door and Effectual is opened unto me.* q. d. I have here a very hopeful Opportunity of converting these Sinners, of winning them to the Faith of Christ. There was not only a great Door, but Effectual also, *ἐνεργῆς*, *Beza* renders it *operosum*, i. e. *ad magnas res conficiendas opportunum*, very opportune and fit for the effecting great Things: But others read it, *ἐνεργῆς*, open, which *Beza* himself proves of as fitter to carry on the Metaphor; that as an open Door gives Entrance into a House, so doth Opportunity into Things and Business: So that the Door of Opportunity was not only Hopeful, but very Hopeful; and seemed so wide, as to invite his utmost and most vigorous Endeavours.

And there were three Things which gave our Apostle such great Hope at *Ephesus*.

1. The willingness and well-preparedness of several People of that City to receive the Doctrine of Christ and of his Salvation: For when he had been at *Ephesus* before, not only many waited on his Preaching, but when he would go away

from them, they desired him to tarry longer with them, *Acts* 18. 20, 21. But he consented not then, that he might go to other Places. And by the way, so fervent in Spirit he was to serve his Lord, that had in such Mercy called him, that if it had been possible, he would have been Ubiquitary, everywhere at once, to do the Work and Service of his Lord. Well, he finds many of the People well prepared to receive him, he hath the Prospect of a great Harvest, though he the only Labourer, so far as appears in this Story. The Fields began to look white, and ready for reaping; as Christ speaks, *John* 4. 35. "When People are willing to hear the Word, it is usually then a Day of Power, and of effecting great Things. *Ostium operosum*, a Door to great Works and good Effects.

2dly, Another thing that made the Door of Opportunity so effectual, was the good Success he had found there. His beginning was but small; we read, *Acts* 19. 7. the Apostles Congregation of Converts was but Twelve: But afterwards the Door was so great, that the Word of God grew mightily, and prevailed, *Ver.* 20. We will suppose, not only those that were so willing of his Ministry, but even those that were his Adversaries; those eminent ones that
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opposed his Doctrine, are now overcome, and become Obedient to the Faith : For he hath now the School of one *Tyrannus* to Preach in, *Act. 19. 9.* the Blasphemy of the Jews having driven him from the Synagogue. This *Tyrannus* was an eminent Rhetorician, *sophista princeps*, whose Rhetorick, say some, was so Powerful, that *Auditores ageret, ferretque* ; he could turn his Hearers this way or that way, as he pleased. He said, and with some probability, that he receiv'd the Faith, and therefore gave St. Paul the free Use of his School. Here are also many that used Magical Arts, and had very valuable Books for their Instruction : The Devil, it seems, had formed it into a Science for them, yet they are made so to see the Iniquity of their Way, that they confess it, renounce it, and with Detestation and Abhorrence cast their Books into the Fire. Such wise Men and eminent Philosophers doubtless were greatly admired in that Place ; and how many other Persons of Eminency for Estate or Place were turned to the Lord, we may suppose, tho' we cannot certainly conclude : Yet this we read, *Act. 19. 31.* that some *Asiarchs*, *Asia Principes*, chosen Men of *Asia*, that were the Chief Priests to preside and order their Theatral Games, even some of these bore such a friend-

friendly Mind towards *St. Paul*, that they took care of his Safety; and sent to him not to hazard his Life by venturing into the Theatre: Which shews at least their good Opinion of his Doctrine, and that they were not far from the Kingdom of God. *Mark* 12. 34. All this made the Door great and effectual: "For when Persons of Eminency begin, other People, from the high Opinion of their Understanding above their own, are easily prevailed with to follow. Which probably was a Reason why *St. Paul's* Zeal broke forth into such a Flame against *Elymas* the Sorcerer, for seeking to turn the Deputy from the Faith, *Act.* 13. 8, 9, 10. because having gained him, there was a Door of Hope open of gaining many more.

3dly, Yet further, that which made the Opportunity more Hopeful, was the Conveniency of the Place. It was at *Ephesus* where the Apostle preached; and from whence it's thought he wrote this Epistle to the *Corinthians*. *Ephesus* was a Renowned City, at that time Famous for many things; it being the great *Emporium* of *Asia*, the great Place of Trade for those Parts: The Seat of the Proconsul, or chief Governour of those Parts; being also an Academy, a Place for Study both of

of the liberal and illiberal Arts too ; having in it many Schools of Learning ; and therefore the People of better Understanding probably than in other Places. We read of the School of one *Tyrannus* in it ; a Divinity School, as the learn'd *Light-foot* says, whither the People went, after their Worship in the Synagogue, to a Divinity-Lecture ; but a Philosophy and Rhetorick School, say others. But especially this City was Famous for the Temple of their great Goddess *Diana*. This Temple was reputed one of the Seven Wonders, or wondrous Fabricks of the World. It is said to be some Hundreds of Years in building, at the Charge of all *Asia*, before it came to its Perfection : All these things caused this City to be greatly frequented ; and so great was the Throng and Confluence of People from all Parts thither, that while the City rang with the New Doctrine that *Paul* Preached, and that for about three Years together, the Curiosity of Multitudes drew them to hear him, insomuch that St. *Luke* sticks not to tell us, *Act*. 19. 10. that in that time, all they which dwelt in *Asia*, heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. Thus it appears how great and effectual the Door was to St. *Paul's* Ministry. This is the first Thing.

2d Part,

2d Part, That the Apostle would tarry at *Ephesus* to attend it, and follow it with all his Power. [I will tarry at *Ephesus* until *Pentecost*] This *Pentecost* was a Feast of the Jews, answering in time to that which we call *Whitsontide*; as their time of the Pascheover did to that which we call *Easter*. It was called the Feast of Weeks; reckoning Seven Weeks, or Fifty Days from their Pascheover, and therefore called by the Greeks *Pentecost*. You must not think that *Paul* being now a Christian, did look upon himself bound in Conscience to go to *Jerusalem* to keep this Feast: But only because of the multitude of Jews and Proselytes that would be there, he would be there also, that he might have the better Opportunity of publishing the Gospel, but at *Ephesus* he would tarry till then; not quite till then neither: For how then could he be at the Feast, it being many Days Journey thither? Nor did he stay so long as he intended, for he is forced away by the Tumult raised by *Demetrius*, *Act.* 19. 23. about a Year, (as it is computed) before he went to *Jerusalem* to that Feast. How long he had been at *Ephesus* when he wrote this Epistle to the *Corinthians*, we know not; but he would tarry there as long as he could; seeing he had so Successfully began,
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he would not slacken his Hand, nor lose the least Opportunity, but would follow his Work, whatever Opposition he met with, and that for these Ends or Reasons.

1. That he might Convert more of them to the Faith of Christ, yea, if possible, that he might Convert them all, and deliver those miserable enslaved Souls from the Power and Bondage of the Devil; that there might not be left any Adversaries to the Truth and Kingdom of Christ: But that he might so instruct them, and convince them of the Wickedness and Vanity of their Idolatry, as might make their Idols Temple forsaken, and as contemptible and abhorrid, as in their Ignorance it had been desired and reverenc'd by them.

2dly, That he might instruct them in all the Truths of the Gospel, even in the whole Will of God for their Salvation; and that he might do this to Purpose, you find him so indefatigable and unwearied in it, that he tells the Elders of *Ephesus*, whom he sent for to him to *Miletus*, *Act.* 20. 17,—20. that they knew he had kept back nothing that was Profitable for them: But had taught them, not only Publickly, but even from House to House, that he might declare unto them all the Counsel of God, *ver.* 27.

3dly,

3dly, That he might confirm and strengthen the weak and wavering ; and might fix and establish them in a right Understanding and Belief of the Truth.

4thly, That he might recover the lapsed, or those that were already fallen away ; and no doubt they were many, especially seeing they had such bold and active Leaders ; as *Hymeneus*, *Philetus* and *Alexander* the Coppersmith ; whose Word or Heretical Doctrine, saith the Apostle, doth eat as doth a Canker ; who concerning the Truth have erred, saying, that the Resurrection is past already, and overthrow the Faith of some, *2 Tim.* 2. 17, 18. These Seducers were so bold, and found the Apostle so much Work, that he first Excommunicates them, and delivers them unto Satan, *in terrorem*, that they may learn not to Blaspheme, and others may fear to follow them, *1 Tim.* 1. 20. And then he leaves *Timothy* to look after the rest, both to Charge some that they Teach no other Doctrine than what he had Taught them and others ; that they should not hear them, nor give heed to their Fables, *1 Tim.* 1. 3, 4.

5thly, He would stay the longer at *Ephesus* also, that he might settle Church-Order and Government among them : That as the Church of God increased there, he might

might Select out of it such as he judged fittest for their Knowledge, Gravity, Prudence and Zeal, to be the Elders among them, to assist in the Government of them; and that he might be wanting to them in nothing, he gives them both a form of Doctrine or sound Words; a Creed as the Standard of their Faith, the same for Substance with the Apostles Creed; and Canons also for Discipline. All this, and much more, you may Read in his Epistles to *Timothy*. Thus for the Second Part of the Text.

3d. Part. [And there are many Adversaries] These Words are added, either as a Reason of his staying so long at *Ephesus*, or at least that this should not hinder his staying there, nor Discourage him in the pursuing his Hopeful Opportunity [though there be many Adversaries] That which would have discouraged others, doth but the more animate him. Such a Soldier he was of Christ, that he never turned his Back to, or hid himself from any that he counted worth the Conquering; he was for attacking Enemies, and would never boast in another Man's Line of things made ready to his Hand, 2 Cor. 10. 16. Great variety of Adversaries he had to do with there, that required the more his Presence and Activity among them, that he might sub-

subdue them., and fortifie others against their Opposition and Infection. He had to do with Philosophers of all sorts, even with those that gloried in their Wisdom and Science, falsely so called ; and despised the Simplicity of Christianity as Ignorance. There were swarms of Idolaters ; and how could it be otherwise, *Ephesus* being the very Center of Idolatry ? It was also Famous, or Infamous rather, for the devilish Art of Magick. We read also of Schools set up on Purpose to propagate this devilish Art : For it is said that *Apollonius Tyaneus*, that Famous Necromancer about this time of *St. Paul*, (for it was about the beginning of *Nero's* Reign) had set up a School at *Ephesus* for this very Purpose. Now where the Devil had such Power, no wonder the Apostle had such Adversaries. And this School-magick serv'd not only to Instruct the Heathens in the Mystery, but the very Jews themselves learn'd and practis'd it, to serve their Malice against the Apostles. Our Learned *Lightfoot* in his Chronicle of the New Testament tells us of a Threefold Practice of Opposition that the Jews used in those times, and after, against the spreading of the Gospel.

1. They

1. They compos'd a Prayer, or Collect, to be daily us'd in their Liturgy against Hereticks, (for so they call'd the Christians) that God would destroy them, as Enemies of their Religion, and Troublers of *Israel*: Which did both serve their own Malice, and kept up and nourish'd, especially in the Devout among them, the Prejudices they had imbib'd against the Doctrine of Christianity.

2dly; They had their Emissaries also, or such as they sent abroad everywhere, to Preach down and Oppose the Christian Doctrine, as we read often of them in the *Acts* of the Apostles.

3dly, They had many that were skill'd, and practis'd in Magical Arts, who did many strange Things; and by such false Miracles, such lying Wonders, would out-face and vilifie the Divine Miracles. These did emulate the Apostles Miracles; and such were those Vagabond Jews, Exorcists, *Act. 19. 13.* And such were *Barjesus*, or *Elymas* the Sorcerer, *Act 13. 6, 8.* What will not Men do to serve their malicious blind Zeal? *Flectere si nequeo superos*— If God will not help, they will try what the Devil will. Such and so many were his Adversaries, that one would wonder humane Frailty could bear up against them: But such a Flame of Zeal for his

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Lord actuated him, that the Floods of Ungodly Men could not quench it; and as long as he saw any Door of Hope open, he would go on, whatever were his Adversaries. And thus for the third and last Thing, from all which we may infer this Proposition.

Prop. That when God gives Opportunity for converting and reforming bad Men, we ought to attend it with the greatest Constancy and Zeal, how much soever, or how many soever Men be Adversaries to it, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. The Apostle advises *Timothy* to follow his Steps, *viz.* To preach the Word, to be instant in Season, out of Season, to Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine, *i. e.* not only to take the Opportunities offered him, but to Watch and Catch at whatever may be a Season of bettering miserable blinded Sinners, and for these Reasons.

1. From the Excellency of the Work. It is of all other the most Glorious and Honourable Work that any can be engaged in; *viz.* To Reform himself, and to Reform others. It is the Work of God; and it is Man's Honour that it is made his: It was the Unconceiveably Glorious Work of God to make Man at first out of nothing; but it is a much more Glorious Work to create

create him again from worse than Nothing unto good Works, *Eph. 2. 10.* And it is our Honour that we are said herein to be Workers together with God, *2 Cor. 6. 1.* He is pleased to condescend to do us this high Honour, to take us into a Fellowship of his own Work; and to cast this Glory upon our Indeavours. In this Respect Men are said to Save, and are called Saviours, *Jam. 5. 20. 1 Tim. 4. 16. Obad. 21. Nehem. 9. 27.* The godly Judges are called Saviours, not only that they fought their Battels, and saved them from their Enemies: But that they also reform'd them, and purged them from those gross Corruptions and Impieties which provoked God to send cruel Enemies against them. Let others value themselves, and boast of the Honour of their high Employments under great Princes, what is this to the Honour Good Men have from God, who are engaged with him in his most Glorious Work; and are said to Save Souls from Death, and to Deliver them that were going down to the Pit of Destruction? *Job 3. 24.* what though Profane Men Despise us, yet the Day is coming, that Glorious Day, when they that turn away Ungodliness from *Jacob*, and turn Men to Righteousness, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever

and ever, *Dan.* 12. 2, 3. when others shall rise to everlasting Shame and Contempt. We have this Honour also, that in this Work we are said to be helpers of God against his Proud Enemies, *Judg.* 5. 23. He complains he was weary to bear them, and that he was pressed under them, as a Cart is pressed that is full of Sheaves, *Amos* 2. 13. at another time, that he was grieved at his Heart, *Gen.* 6. 6. in all these Expressions, *humanum dicit*, he speaks after the manner of Men, grieved and oppressed; and can we evermore seasonably Honour God and Honour our selves too? Then to be on God's side, and to come in to his Help and Relief, we are in this, as in other Acts of Obedience, the true Friends of God; when Profligate, Profane Debauchees, are declared Rebels and Enemies of the Almighty. All the Patriarchs, and Prophets, the Righteous Judges, Kings, and good Men, were all in this Work of Reformation, to cleanse Kingdoms and their Families as they could of what was against God; it was the Work even of Christ himself, when on Earth, who not only came to bring this Blessing, to turn Men from their Iniquities, *Act.* 3. 26. but took upon himself to Reform and Purge the Temple, by casting out the Profaners

it; and now can we have the Honour of better Work, and better Company?

2dly, From the constant Necessity of Reformation; it is a Work that must be carried on as long as the World endures: There ever were, and ever will be, Bad and Scandalous Men, as well as Good and Virtuous; unless we may hope for the return of that Golden Age feigned by the Poets, *Quæ, vindice nullo pœna metusq; aberant,* &c. *Ovid.* There was need of no Punisher, for there was no fear of any Hurt; every Man did what was Right and Just. We look for no such Times. But this we are sure of, that there is no Christian, or civilized State or Kingdom, but thinks this Work so Necessary, at least to their Well-being, that some means must be used for it, or all will come to Ruin. Noisome hurtful Weeds will be growing in the Field of the Church and State, which must be watched and weeded out; and all Men that have any Sense or Fear of God, or any Concern for the Good of the Community, ought in their Places to lend their Helping-hand to it; but especially the Ministers of the Sword, and Ministers of the Word. It is a dreadful Character that is given of the People of *Laiish*, and a Pre-
fage of their Ruin, that they lived Careless and Secure, and that there was no

Magistrate in the Land to put them to Shame, *Judg.* 18. 7. Men will corrupt themselves, and those will be corrupting others; then *Ense recidendum est* — then is the time for Magistrates to use their Power, that the bad may be suppressed, and others may fear, that all be not corrupted. We see Punishments usually have their good Ends, but then they must be continued. *Naturam expellas furca* — Put Sin to never so much Shame in any, yet we sadly see it must be repeated; and new Occasions will arise to find Magistrates Work, as long as there's any.

3dly, From the end of Magistracy and Ministry; they are the Ordinance and Ministers of God, to attend continually upon this very thing, *Rom.* 13. 6. The Law, saith St. Paul, is not made for a Righteous Man, but for the Lawless and Disobedient, for the Ungodly and Profane, *1 Tim.* 1. 9. Therefore Ministers of the Word must warn and convince them of their Evil; and Magistrates must be Terrors and Revengers to execute Wrath upon them that do Evil, *Rom.* 13. 2, 4. Magistrates are God's Deputies upon Earth; and to beget Reverence toward them, he hath put so much of his Honour upon them, that they are called Gods, *Psal.* 82. 1, 6. He hath given them such Dominion over Men, and
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armed them with such Authority, as should make them value themselves in this their Relation to God, and oblige them to Serve him Faithfully, who hath Called them, and will Reward them; and to see that they be not Partakers of other Mens Sins by their Remisness and Negligence.

4thly, From the good Ends of such Endeavours for Reformation. If any ask *Quorsum hac?* What means all this ado? *Ans.* All these Endeavours are, 1. For the good of particular Offenders. 2dly, For the good of the whole, and the preventing its Ruin.

1. For the good of particular Offenders, and to prevent their Ruin both here and for ever. Sad Experience makes us see what Mischiefs foolish People bring upon themselves, and see it not: How little Regard they have to their Health and Life; to their Estates and Fortunes; to their Families, Wives, and Children, and all that depend upon them; to their Peace, their Credit and Reputation, as well as to their Soul's Good and Welfare: All these Goods they blindly and willingly Sacrifice to Devils, while they Sacrifice them to their Lusts and Debaucheries; and to make sure to bring down the Curse of God upon them, they usually add the profaning of the Lord's Day, which he will not hold

them Guiltless for. It is Notorious in Prisons, especially in that great Goal of *Newgate*; I have it from the Testimony of the Ordinary of the Place; that of the few that Die from thence with any Sense of their Guilt, he hardly ever knew any such executed, but they lamented most their Sabbath-breaking: That they forsook God and his Worship, and he justly forsook them, and left them to fall into those Sins which brought them to that I shameful End. Now what shall we say for the Amendment of such, but as *Solomon*, that in their Folly they go thus Astray; and that what the Authority of the Word of God cannot do to convince them, and restrain them, and make them better, the sense of Shame, and loss by Punishments from the Authority of Magistrates must? We may say of the foolish Children of the Kingdom, as *Solomon* speaks of Children of a Family, that Folly is bound up in their Hearts, but the Rod of Correction must drive it far from them, *Pro. 22. 15.* And because such Corrections are not more frequently used, the Hearts of the Sons of Men are so fully and sadly set in them to do Evil, *Eccles. 8. 11.* It is God's way to awaken Men by Punishments, when his gentler Means will not prevail. Punishments naturally tend to the making Men

cor.

consider and come to themselves, who have been long stupified and drowned in their Luxury and Wickedness. Correction and Admonition hath made many a Child good, which otherwise would have been a Child of Perdition. I may say as the Apostle, *Heb. 12. 11.* no Punishment for the present seemeth Joyous but Grievous, but after it yieldeth the Fruit of Righteousness to their Peace and Comfort; and happy it is then for such that they have felt such Punishments and Corrections. I doubt not many can say by Experience, with him, *Periissem nisi periissem*, I had been undone, if suffering had not awakened me to consider and amend.

Obj. But this was not St Paul's Course: The Weapons of his Warfare were not Carnal, but yet they were Mighty through God, to the turning and mending Sinners, *2 Cor. 10. 4.*

Ans. 'Tis true, and so I trust are the Weapons of our Ministry through God's Blessing; and it is as true also, that St. Paul was no Magistrate, nor were there then any Christian Magistrates that had Authority to punish such Offenders: But,

1. He could and did inflict much sorer Punishments upon scandalous, disorderly and incorrigible Sinners that were Christians; and that was to deliver them over
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to Satan to Punish and Torment them in their Flesh and Bodies, that they might be awakened, and brought to Repentance, that the Soul might be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. 5. 5. In the want of other Power, the Apostles and others were forc'd to appeal to God, that *He* might Punish them Miraculously.

2dly, But yet the Apostle tells you what Magistrates should do, according to their Office, whether Christian or Infidel, *viz.* to be Terrors to evil Doers, and not to bear the Sword in vain: But that as they are the Ministers of God, they are to be Revengers, to execute Wrath or Punishment upon them that do Evil, *Rom.* 13. 3--6. and they are continually to attend upon this very thing, and others are bound in Conscience to submit to them.

3dly, When Kingdoms became Christian, Kings, and other Magistrates under them, assumed the same Authority which the Apostle asserts is theirs, over Christians, and as the Kings of *Judah* did then over their People; and as Christian Magistrates have done ever since, and that rightfully to.

2dly, The other end is for the good of the whole; and the preventing its Ruin by those Miseries, that Wickedness and Prophaneness unpunished will necessarily bring

bring upon the Kingdom. If the too common Wickedness be not animadverted on and chastised, who can foresee what the woful Consequences of it will be unto us? To what degree of Boldness, yea, Impudence, will Transgressors quickly grow to! All Laws, both Sacred and Civil, will be trampled under Foot; Magistracy it self will be despised; the Cry of Violence and Rapine will be everywhere heard, and what Confusions will not follow upon all this! Whenas if there were no King in *Israel*, every Man might do what the Devil and his own wicked Heart might lead him to! Now what Remedy is left us to prevent all these Mischiefs, but as I have said, if Warnings from God's Word will not make Men fear, the power of the Magistrate must? It was the sad Case of *Judah*, and when they were Ripe for Ruin, that there was no Remedy; no Remedy for their Deliverance; when both Princes and People all conspired together to contemn God, to mock and misuse his Messengers and Prophets, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. Blessed be God, as bad as we are, we are not yet at this sad pass; God's true Worship is continued among us, his Ministers are reverenc'd, nor hath Justice forsaken us: For we see Murders, Oppressions, Robberies, &c. are usually Prosecuted and Punished
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by our Judges and Magistrates: But how long this will be, if profaning of God's Name and Day, Debaucheries and Immoralities may go on still unpunished? These things have been too long Incouraged and Practised; and are grown to that head and commonness, that it is now high time for Magistrates that will own themselves on God's side, to put on the Girdle of holy Resolution, and to cloath themselves with Zeal, as with a Garment, that they may put a timely stop to such Mens wicked Extravagancies, subdue them to the government of our good Laws, and reduce them to Order; that so they may prevent their further corrupting others by their vicious Examples, make them more useful in their Places, and so contribute to the common Good; and teach them to live as Men, and not as Infidels and Brutes; and so prevent our perishing through the righteous Judgment of God: For then is God's time to work in Wrath and Justice, when Men, without controul, make void his Law, *Psal.* 119. 126. When Wickedness grows Impudent, and Magistrates put it not to Shame to restrain it, God usually brings his Action and Process against the Place and People. Scripture History sufficiently shews us, what Miseries general Corruption, and connived at, brought upon both God's *Israel*, and those that

that were not his *Israel*: How he sold them into their Enemies Hand, and made them that hated them, to Rule over them. How near we have been to this we all know, or might know; and that we have been snatched as a Brand out of the Fire often, *Zach.* 3. 2. and when the Knife has been even at our Throat, to have made us a Sacrifice to the Malice of our Bloody Enemies, even then in the Mount the Lord was seen for our Relief and Deliverance, *Gen.* 22. 14. And we may reasonably hope, that as long as the Supreme Authority doth not countenance, and that Magistrates in their Places punish Immoralities and Prophaneness, that God will not impute them as National Sins, but will yet spare us, yea, rejoice over us to do us good. Thus for the Doctrinal part; next for Application.

Use 1. Seeing the Apostle would preach on there, where were many Adversaries, why should we be discouraged in our Ministry because of such? He could the rather tarry and abide by it, not only that he might confirm those he had won to the Faith, but that he might make those that were Adversaries, to become Friends. Our business is not only to build up Men in their holy Faith, but to convert them to it; and to do this, if we will be faithful, we cannot ordinarily want Adversaries;
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some will not endure sound Doctrine ; others for the love of the Lufts of this World, will not endure to have them touched, or to be convinced of their Misery under the Power of them ; and thus we are often hated as Enemies, because we tell them the Truth, *Gal. 4. 16.* which made *Luther* say, That to be a Preacher of the Gospel, was to set all the World against him. And though the Persons we Preach to have the Name of Christians, and were in some Sence declared Regenerate at their Baptism, yet we are sure too many need Conversion and Reformation : We not only sadly see how little their Baptismal Vow doth influence and affect them, that they live really as Infidels ; but that they are Adversaries to us also in Malice and Bitterness, in Scoffings and Reproaches, in exposing our Infirmities, and injuring us in our Rights, &c. and no less Adversaries to us than those at *Ephesus* were to the Apostle. But what if all this be ? I will say as God doth to the Prophet *Ezek. 2. 6.* Though Briars and Thorns be with us, and we dwell among Scorpions, yet we must not be dismayed ; and as we have like Adversaries with the Apostle, let us follow his Methods in hope of winning and reclaiming them ; viz. to Preach to them, to be instant in Season, out of Season, Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort

Exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance, 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. making them know the Terror of the Lord's Judgment-Day, that we may persuade them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. bringing forth God even to Beseech them, and Praying them in Christ's Name and Stead to be reconciled, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. And though they may despise the plainness we use to them, yet it may please God, by the foolishness of Preaching (as they account it) to save them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. Such as these were the Apostles Wages, and to be used by us, for the recovering and reconciling Adversaries to God. Oh with what Wisdom, Patience, and Long-suffering, with what Zeal and Courage, with what Bowels of Pity to miserable Souls, and with what Love of our God and Saviour, should we come prepared to the Office of the Ministry! But this is not always thought of then. There are many things wherein we are not now requir'd to imitate the Apostle; as his painful Travels, his exposing himself to many Dangers and Troubles, his enduring Hunger and Nakedness, his refusing Wages for his Work, &c. which made some Jesuits in *Italy* in their Sermons censure *St. Paul* as Hot-headed, and Transported with overmuch Zeal, and that there-

therefore no great reckoning was to be made of his Assertions; as Sir *Edw. Sandys* tells us in his *Europ. Specul.* p. 165. It is not now as it was then; we live in a Christian Kingdom, the People generally under the Bonds of the Baptismal Covenant, and distribution is made of them to the Care and Charge of particular Ministers, beyond whose limits and numbers they are not to pass or meddle with. And because even among these some will be Adversaries to the Faith and Righteousness of Christ, and to us for his sake, we are to use our utmost Diligence and Skill so to Instruct, and Convince, and Warn them, that we might, if possible, bring them to God, that they might be saved; but if not, that we may be unto God a sweet Saviour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish, 2 *Cor.* 2. 15. And though we have laboured in vain for some, and they will not be gathered into the blessed Fellowship of God's faithful Servants, in his Kingdom and Benefits, yet we shall have this our Comfort, that their Blood will not be required at our Hands, and that we shall be Glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and Rewarded, *Isa.* 49. 4, 5.

2dly, More particularly, let us not be discouraged in, nor ashamed of the business and ends of our Society, before any in the
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World. Let us but compare our Case now, with the Apostles then at *Ephesus*, and we shall find the Case in many things very Parallel ; as, 1. A great Door and Effectual was opened to him, and so it is to us ; and that which made the Door so Effectual and Opportune to him, was, partly, the Desire of many, to have the Word of Reconciliation preached to them there, as I have shewed you before ; and partly the hopeful Beginning he has made, and the good Success he had upon his Preaching to them ; and our Case is not unlike herein to his : For, 1. What general Lamentation, and sad Complaints were commonly heard here (from those that had any Concern for God and the Nation's Good) of the Boldness of Man in Wickedness ; with what Confidence and Security Men would Blaspheme the Name of God, and Practice their Debaucheries, as if authorized by a Law ? And therefore with what Fears and longing Desires have good People expected some Reformation, that some Stop might be put to the Torrent of Wickedness, that so long run uncontroul'd amongst us, and endanger'd the carrying away with it all good from us, we know ? 2dly, Though the Fruits and good Effects of our Endeavours be as yet not very great, (and how can it be expected

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pected it should be otherwise, seeing our Province wherein we Act lyes so dispersed and disjoined, that we are denied the Advantages that more compacted Bodies of People afford for Observation and Information) yet this we can say, that, *ceteris paribus*, through the Blessing of God we bear no very unequal Proportion to the Successes and good Effects of the greatest and best formed Societies. Let us not then despise the Day of small things, *Zech. 4. 10.*

2dly, The Apostle would tarry at *Ephesus*; he would follow his Successes, both to maintain what he had gained, and that he might win more to the Obedience of Christ. Our Resolutions and Practice are herein not unlike, and for the like Ends, *viz.* that we might somewhat abate the Rage, and give some Check to that Insolent Boldness in Profaneness and Immoralities among us, and reduce the Unruly into some better Order; and, blessed be God, our Labour hitherto has not been in vain. Let us then with the Apostle abide by our Beginnings, especially seeing we have such good Incouragement; we have the King and his Laws on our side, our Zealous Metropolitan, and our own Pious Bishop incourage us; we are helped and favoured by our Worthy Justices; and

and the Zeal of many Brethren, who have willingly offered themselves for this Service, and marked out so many Offenders for the suffering of the Legal Punishments, hath this good Effect, that People now begin to shew some Fear, and chuse rather secretly to Rail and Scoff, than so openly to expose themselves to Shame and Loss as heretofore: So that if after all this we become Remiss, we shall both invite the return of a greater Measure of Profaneness, &c. and draw upon our selves more their Hatred and Contempt; like Waters restrained a while by a Dam, as soon as they find a Breach, overflow with greater Fury. Let us therefore, as we have so well begun, abide by our Work, as the Apostle did by his.

3dly, The Apostle had many Adversaries, and so have we; and how can it be expected it should be otherwise? All Histories, both Sacred and Profane, tell us, what Opposition Reformation hath ever met with, through some Mens Ignorance or Malice: What bloody Wars and Confusions it hath caused through them, in Germany, France, and other Places: And with what Difficulty it was begun, and for a time continued here in this Land, we know; and had been utterly crush'd and extinct, had not the Authority and Zeal

of our Gracious King and Queen interposed and encouraged it, and the Heroick Zeal of those first Pious Reformers supported them. And for our selves, what false Accusations we have laboured under, is Notorious ; some charging us as Movers of Sedition, others as Uncanonical ; the first of these we cannot be ; for how can we be Seditious, who neither attempt any thing to the Trouble or Detriment of the King's or Kingdom's Peace and Welfare, nor want the Laws to Protect us ? And there is as little Reason to charge us as Uncanonical, or offending against any Canon of our Church, in our assembling as a Society ; let them that Accuse us produce the Canons we Transgress, we are willing to be judged by them. Besides, it makes little to the Honour of our Metropolitan-Bishop, that he by his Circular Letter to the Bishops of his Province, and they from him, should encourage the entering into such Societies, and all this while be ignorant of the Canons. But leaving these trifling Objectors, let me,

3dly, Speak a plain Word to our Adversaries, by what Names soever they are to be called, whether they be invidious Adversaries, or Profane ; I might add also, or Popish Adversaries, whose Business, as it is said of them, is and has been to Debauch the Nation, what they can, as the

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best Preparative to Apostacy from the Truth, and the receiving their Damnable Heresies. To all such, as they are Adversaries to Reformation, let me say,

1. Is Reformation so odious to you, and so frightful a thing, that you must needs be Adversaries to it? Is there no good in being reformed to an orderly and sober Living, but it must be hated rather as a Mischief to you? Is the Judgment and Ways of the Worst of Men to be preferr'd before those of the Wisest? Or, do you think and judge those the Worst of Men and Fools, that live in Piety towards God, in Love and Lowliness, in Innocency and Justice towards all Men, and in Temperance, Soberness and Chastity with themselves? I know you do not; and you cannot but reverence such Persons as others do. Had you rather your Fathers and Mothers, your Wives, Sons and Daughters, or any you are concerned for, should live a Life of Profaneness and Debauchery, of Whoredom, Drunkenness and Idleness, than to live a Decent, Sober and Christian Life? Do you not care if you see all the dismal, sorrowful Fruits and Effects of a Debauch'd and Profane Life, in all your Relations, Friends and Neighbours, as Quarrels, Fightings, Murders, Disgrace in the World, loss of Credit, impoverishing and ruining themselves and Families,

loss of Health, and incurable Diseases, &c. and which is yet worse, (as we have seen in the late Reigns) Men so horribly Perfidious and Corrupt in the greatest Trusts, that we could not have the benefit of our Laws to Protect our Lives and Estates? What Bribery, Treachery, what Insidiations and lying in Wait, &c. was then encouraged to deprive us of our Lives, Peace, and Fortunes? All this, and much more, we have sadly seen; and what Mischiefs will not follow upon Debauchery! When Men become debauch'd, they soon lose both Honour and Conscience; and what will they not then do to serve their own or others wicked Lusts and Interests? I know you are not so mad, so void of Reason, to be indifferent to these things; if you are, you are unworthy of the Name of Man, or of the Society of Men; and do you not care though you and yours live Odious to God and good Men, in Contempt of God's Laws and Man's, live here without any Hope, and through God's hatred of you, Perish for ever? If these things be of any Force with you, why should you be against those Ways that may restrain such vicious Courses, and may reform Men, to the bringing them to a better Mind, and into honest
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and good Ways? For is it not better that of Drunkards and Sots, Men become Sober and Temperate? Of Mad Men and Desperate, to become Thoughtful, Serious and Religious? Of Prodigal Wasters of their Time and Substance, to become Frugal and Prudent, for the Comfort of themselves and their Families? Of Profane Swearers and Liars, who are valued or believ'd of none, to become Men of Truth, beloved and trusted? And of odious Cheats, Deceivers and Wranglers, to live Just and Honest Men, and fit for Dealing and Society in the World, &c. If these things be so, then never blame us, or any, for endeavouring to make Men such by reforming them.

Let no Man think to Plead that we make the worst of every thing, and that a little now and then of any of these Offences is no great Hurt. *Ans.* God and all Honest Men are of our Mind; and the least of any of these Offences must be repented of, not after the way of the World, in cold Hypocrisie, but in Sincerity, or you must Perish; and if you allow yourselves an Inch, (as the Proverb is) the Devil will draw you on to take an Ell, and God in his just Judgment for your wilful Sinning may give you up to the

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Devil,

Devil, to blind you so far, that those that love and pity you, may have Cause enough to pray for you in Christ's Words; Father, forgive them, they know not what they do, *Luk. 23. 34.*

2dly, Must the Nation (generally speaking) lye weltring in its own Pollutions, and under the Guilt of dismal Profaneness, &c. and no Overtures be used for the cleansing and healing it? Must God's Name be blasphemed? Must Atheism be rather encouraged? And all God's Threatnings, and terrible Judgments, as Earthquakes, Famines, Oppressions by cruel Enemies, &c. upon other People and Nations, that we should hear and fear, and cease to do Evil, give us no Warning, and no Means be used to prevent the like Miseries to our selves?

3dly, Can Men expect that we should be Partakers of other Mens Sins, by our Connivance, or not using the Opportunities and Means to put a stop to the Wickedness and Profaneness that is among us? Can they expect that we should with Patience look on, and see, and hear them tempting God, and provoking him to their own Confusion, *Jer. 7. 19.* when a Door of Opportunity is open to us to restrain it? Christian Charity, and the Love of
God,

God, binds us to pity such, as not knowing what they do; and to endeavour by all Lawful Means to Awaken them, and bring them to their Right Mind.

4^{thly}, Are good Mens Fears and Mourning for the Abominations that are among us, nothing to be accounted of? They fear what God in Anger may do against us; what Miseries he may let in upon us, and that he may Deliver us up to the Tyranny of those that Hate us, and have been long Thirsting after, and contriving for our Blood and Goods. They fear lest the Decree break forth from God, to Pluck up, and Pull Down, and Destroy the Kingdom, *Jer.* 18. 7. and must you be and live Despisers of God, his Holiness, Jealousie, Justice and Power, and by your Foolish Contempt of him, Forsake and Forfeit your own Mercies, of Peace, Deliverance, &c. *Jon.* 2. 8. and no Notice taken of it?

5^{thly}, Must we have no Concern for the Welfare of our Children and Families, and for their being Ruin'd by the Debaucheries of the Age; to the Ruin of Soul, and Body, and Estate, and all that is of Worth to us? Doth not daily Experience tell us what are the woful Fruits and Effects of our Profaneness and Immoralities? How madly Men destroy their own Lives, and

and Families, and Estates by them? What Grief, and Fear, and Care good Parents have for their Children, and others they are concern'd for, lest they should run on with such into the same excess of Riot and Wickedness, to their utter Ruin?

6thly, Hath God made it the Minister's Duty and Work to blow the Trumpet, to sound an Alarm, to cry Aloud, and not to spare; to tell People of their Transgressions, their Heinous Crying Sins, and must they not use what means they can to suppress them? Or must we say and do not, like them, *Matth.* 23. 3. when a Door is opened to us to invite us to do our utmost? If you are, we are not willing your Blood should be required at our Hands.

7thly, To conclude, Is it all one to you whether you be God's Adversaries or Friends? Whether he love or hate you? Remember, God is said to be angry with the Wicked every Day, and all the Day long, *Psal.* 9. 11. and who can stand when once he is angry? *Psal.* 76. 7. Remember, it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God, *Heb.* 10. 31. And can thine Heart then endure, or can thy Hands be strong enough to defend thy self in the Day when he shall deal with thee? *Ezek.* 22. 14. If you will still go on to do wickedly,

edly, you shall be destroyed, both you and your King, who is worth Ten Thousand of us, 1 Sam 12. 25. Nay, if you are wilfully resolved to become Adversaries to God and Godliness, you do the utmost you can to deprive your selves for ever of any benefit of the Sacrifice of Christ: For there remains no more, or other Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries, Heb. 10. 26, 27.

4. Use. Next to our Adversaries, let me speak a few words to our Friends; and, 1. To you Right Honourable and Worshipful, that have been pleased to Honour our Society, to become Members of it; and that have been and still are our worthy Patriots and Favourers. All our Hopes and Purposes had been frustrate, our Desires could not have been accomplished, nor any our Endeavours proceeded, if you had not encouraged them, by lending your helping Hand to us. We do always therefore, and in all places, thankfully accept it, and acknowledge the worthy Deeds done herein by you. We had never made that happy progress neither, had it not been for that Zeal you have shewed, and for that your never to be forgotten Prudence, so worthy of you, in all. It is indeed your proper

proper Work, unto which God and Man hath called you, and you know ; to encourage the finding out the Troublers of our *Israel*, and to be Terrors to evil Doers: It is not so properly ours, but, in this necessity, it must be ours too, and should be every ones, that hath any Concern for the Honour of God and the Nation's good, to lend what help he can, that this Reforming Work may go on, to the suppressing Vice, and the stopping the Mouth of iniquity, that its Cry be not heard against us ; if this may be a preventing those Judgments that threaten us.

And would God, to all these your worthy Deeds hitherto, you would be pleased to add the strict enjoining Constables, and other Officers in their several Parishes, to observe and punish those that on the Lord's Day absent themselves from the Publick Worship of God : As the Law now stands, no Man's Conscience would be oppressed thereby : But abundance of Wickedness would be prevented, that Thousands of People, through the just Judgment of God are suffered to fall into: Besides the Honour that would be to our Church, above others, in other Parts of the World ; and the Beauty and Amiability that would appear in Mens then being
made

made generally to reverence God's holy Institutions.

Let me also remember you, that in all that you do in this Work, you act for God, and for his Honour; who hath promised, and will return it in Double Honour to you, with a Blessing upon you and yours. I doubt not to say, that in all your Zealous acting hitherto, you have sensibly found the present Recompence of inward Peace and Satisfaction in your selves; and will do more; which you may look upon as an Earnest of that Reward of Everlasting Tranquility and Joy, which God hath ensured to all those that in their Places truly serve him.

5. *Use.* To you that act in a lower Sphere as Informers, that yet have so well contributed to this Work; and the more acceptably, that you have so willingly offered your selves to it. You are the Magistrates Eyes, without whom they see little. You are their Sentinels, to give warning of Adversaries; and are so necessary, that Magistrates themselves, how willing soever, would want this good Work without you. Value your selves upon this, and give God thanks that he hath given you Hearts to do it. It is your Honour and Comfort to be any thing, in serving the good Ends of this Society. Never dread the Name of Informer,

mer, (time was when it was justly odious, being both the Office of lewd Fellows, of the baser sort, *Acts* 17. 5. ordinarily and only to cause Trouble and Suffering to honest, consciencious Men, but) which is now Honourable with good men, while you espy and give notice of that loathsome Filthiness that hath so long infected and infested the Land, that it may be removed, and Tranquility in Church and State be enjoyed. It is you that find out the *Achans* that have been so long and still are the Troublers of our *Israel's* Peace. It is to your praise also that hitherto no Adversary hath been able to accuse you of any false Information; how open soever their Mouths have been otherwise against you, who themselves account it no Reproach to inform against a Thief or Murderer, &c. But that is for their own sake; and why should it be thought a Reproach to inform against Men, when they Blaspheme, &c. for God's and the Nation's sake? You have the Protection both of God's Laws and Man's; and whatever Reproaches such cast upon you, would terrifie you by their Curses, and by affixing (as they would have it) the odious Name of Informers on you, yet you may Justly glory in it, as Bearing the Reproach of Christ, and with him
Despising

Despising the Shame of this World, *Heb.* 12. 2. Therefore rather with *Job*, *Job.* 3. 31. 26. take it upon your Shoulders, and bind it as a Crown to you. Account it a great Reward from God, that Men Revile and Persecute you, and say all manner of Evil against you Falsly, for his sake: For Christ hath Pronounc'd you Blessed now, and Assured you, that great is your Reward that is laid up for you in Heaven, *Matth.* 5. 11, 12. Good Men Praise you, and Pray for you; and therefore whatever be the Malice of the World, faint not, but lift up your Heads, and look up, and see that your Reward draweth nigh, *Luk.* 21. 28.

But see that you walk circumspectly, that you not only give no just Occasion to Adversaries to reproach you: But that you have your Conversation so Honest among them, that whereas they speak evil of you, they may by your good Conversation, which they shall behold, be induced to glorifie God; and by your well-doing you may put to Silence the Ignorance of such Foolish Men, 1 *Pet.* 2. 12, 15. Wherefore, my Beloved Brethren, let me exhort you in the Words of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in this Work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.

6. Use.

6. *Use.* Next to you that Despise the World's Reproach of being Informers, let me exhort others, for God's sake, to become such. The Door of Opportunity is as open to you, as to others. The Work will be as highly commendable in you, and render you as much Valued of God and all good Men as others. It is your Zeal, like *Phinehas's*, in such corrupt Times, that must help to Turn away the Wrath of God, that he Consume us not in his Jealousie, *Numb. 25. 11.* and God will Reward yours, as he did his. You want for no Encouragement; you will follow herein the Examples of the Saints of Old, and the good Examples of such now. It is the fewness as yet of such that makes them so Obnoxious: Would but more of you come in, and list your selves to serve under the same Banner, you would soon arise to that Strength and Fame, as would make all the Adversaries to hide themselves, and be ashamed. I doubt not many of you are Well-wishers of the Reformation, that Mourn to see Prophaneness, &c. so bold among us; and why then should you be wanting in the same Zeal, Courage, and Activity with others, to promote it? It would be your Honour, and Comfort too, to your dying Day, and in it; it would make you revered of most, and loved of good Men. Let none, of whatever Quality or Degree, think

think it below them to assist in this Work of giving Informations; it is the Cause of God, and you are herein called the Helpers of him against his proud Enemies, *Judg. 5. 23.* Nothing should be accounted mean that is service to the Honour of the most high God. *David*, though a King, disdained not, and that with all his might and joy, to Dance with the common People, at the bringing up of the Ark of God to *Jerusalem*, *2 Sam. 6. 14.* and for this Reason; it was before the Lord, *v. 21.* It was the Complaint in *Nehem. 3. 5.* that while others Labour'd Hard, the Nobles did not put their Necks to the Work of the Lord. And why should they not, who are more Obligated to God than others, and will be greater sharers in the common Blessings, that we may Reasonably hope will be the Fruits of it? What though the Adversaries be as yet never so many, or so great, though they be as mighty *Zamzumias*, let no Man's Heart fail him because of them: In such a Case, we must not fear to take a Lion by the Beard: Such People, whatever they be, are both Pitied and Despised. Their Rock is not as your Rock, *Deut 32. 31.* you have the Almighty God to Trust in and Comfort you, our own Laws to Protect you, and the Zeal of those that at first, and hitherto, have bore the Brunt in this good Cause, should Encourage you: Why should
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you fear more than them, and deny your selves a Fellowship in the Peace and Rejoicing you might have with them? Can you bear no Shame or Contempt, no Scorn or Hatred from this World for your God and Saviour's Sake, which he has promised so greatly to Reward? *Matth. 5. 11, 12.* And who pronounces a **Wo** to you? Who would have all Men speak well of you? *Luk. 6. 26.* I will only Remember you of that Word of his, *Mark 8. 38.* whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and my Word in this Adulterous and Sinful Generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with his Holy Angels.

Use. 7. My last Address shall be to you that are Parents and Masters of Families: The Door of Opportunity is always open to you; you have it ever in your own Power: Would you but do your own Parts; would you Reform your selves, and use that Authority which God and Man have given you for Reforming those under you; the Work of Reformation would soon come to that Maturity and Ripeness, that there would be little need of Societies to promote it; little need of Informers, or of Magistrates and other Officers trouble to Punish Mens Immoralities and Profaneness: If you would go before them in Gravity and Godliness, and

and be a Pattern to them of **Uncorrupt-**
ness and **Sincerity**; if you would **Instruct**
them in the **Knowledge** of their **Duties**
to **God** and **Man**, and in your **Families**
Pray with, and for them: If you would
shew a steady loving **Zeal** and **Concern**
for **God** and their **Welfare**; not to en-
dure a wicked **Servant** or other with you,
to **Corrupt** others; never to be **Guilty**
your selves, nor allow your **Children** or
Servants in any **Fraud** or **Dishonesty** in **Word**
or **Deed**; if you would shew your selves,
and endeavour to bring on others, to a
Reverence of the **Lord's Day**, and his **Holy**
Institutions for **Worship**, both **Publick**
and **Private**; would you let the **Praises**
of **God** be heard in your **Families**, in
singing forth the **Honour** of his **Name**:
Were the **Word** of **God** read and reve-
renc'd, and you resolved to make it the
Law to **Govern** your selves, and all yours,
by. Were these things practis'd, O how
Great, how **Manifold**, would the **Blessings**
be, that would arise from such right or-
dering your **Families**! All these things are
in some **Measure** practis'd by those that
are truly **Pious** and **Honest**, and should be
by every **Christian**, **Rich** and **Poor**. And
were these things but seriously endeavour-
ed, then would true **Religion** recover its
Honour, **Esteem**, and **Reverence**; Then
we should see what blessed **Seminaries** and

Nurseries godly Families are to the dispersing Abroad its lovely Fruits of Vertue and Godliness ; and to the sending forth such righteous Branches, as would be Blessings both to Church and State. And you the Fathers and Governours of such Families, that have distinguish'd yourselves from this wicked World, by owning and honouring God in the midst of a perverse Generation ; he will make you to be honoured in your Time and Generation, 1 Sam. 2. 30. You will enjoy Peace and Comfort in your selves, from the Testimony of your Consciences, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly worldly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, you have had your Conversation in this World, 2 Cor. 1. 12. and may very reasonably hope to see the Blessing of God upon all yours, as the Fruit of your Endeavours with them, and save them from the Sins, the common Sins of Profaneness and Immorality, and from those Mischiefs that are the usual Fruits of wicked and debauch'd Families. And who is able to Recount them? Profane and Debauch'd Families are the common Seminaries and Source of all the Filthiness and Lewdness that is among us. In such Families all kind of Vice and Naughtiness is bred and nourished : There Drunkenness, Whoredoms, Brawling

and Quarrels, there is Pride and Oppression, Swearing and Forswearing, Blasphemy, Cursing, and little or no Calling upon God, unless it be to Damn one another: So that they are the very Image of Hell; there the Devil bears Rule, the Curse of God is upon them and theirs, *Prov. 3. 33.* There Children, otherwise Hopeful, are Ruin'd by the Parent's ill Example, or incurably corrupted by their wicked Servants. There Masters, otherwise far from being Fools, are so infatuated and besotted, that their Estates, and sometimes very great ones, Waste and Consume Remedilessly, and this help'd on, too commonly, by Faithless Servants: And who can Pity such, who will neither Regard God themselves, nor endure an honest godly Servant to Dwell in their House? Such Authors they have been of Mischief and Wickedness, that little Good is expected from those they leave behind them; in short, the Fruit of all is this, they are despised while Alive, and their Memory rots when Dead, *Prov. 10. 7.* I will add yet further, that from hence, as from a corrupt Fountain, are sent forth into Grammar-Schools such vicious Children, as Corrupt, and sometimes utterly Spoil others; where they learn those first Rudiments of Vice and Naughtiness, that they are never cured of to their Dying Day. There is hardly that Wickedness named, that is not to be found
in

in great and Publick-Schools, which some Children bring with them thither. So that godly Parents, that would have their Children live the Servants of God, and dread the Thoughts of their perishing with the World, are at a great Loss what to do with them, and where to have them Educated, that they may retain those good Impressions wrought on them, or may be preserved from being infected by others. From these Schools they are removed, either to Places where they are bred up for Trades, or to the Universities, and from thence, some to the Inns of Court: To all these Places they usually carry the same corrupt Minds, (if happily they learn not to be better) some of these through their great Merits arrive to the greatest Posts in Church and State, but in all their Way thither retain generally their bad Taint, to the hurt of both; unless some through God's great Mercy escape out of this corrupt Estate, as Brands out of the Fire. By this you may sadly see what a mischievous Influence disorderly and profane Families have upon the whole Body of the Nation; and if all this will not convince you of what Importance it is, to look carefully to the governing your selves and Families in the Fear of God, you must be Content, (if it will be any Comfort to you) to take what will be the woful, deplorable, and notorious Consequences

ces of the Neglect of it. It is this well ordering Families that keeps up the Face and Honour of Religion in a Nation. *England* could once be said, in this Respect, to be the Glory of all Lands, in that I believe there never were such a Stock, for Number and Quality of Religious Families, as were once in this Land; though by Malignant Mouths and Pens reproach'd as Puritans: It is a hard thing among our present Gentry or Nobility to find such now. But this I know, and am sure of, that you never knew any truly Honest Man but did in some Measure endeavour to shew himself such, by the godly Care of his Family; nor can you find any Saints in the Scriptures of the Old or New Testament, but it is either exprest or implied in their History, how careful they were to have God honour'd in their Families, and by them. *Enoch* walked with God, *Gen.* 5. 24. So did *Noah*, who was Righteous and Perfect in his Generations, *Gen.* 6. 9. and this neither the one nor other could be and do, unless both them and theirs served the Lord: But of *Abraham*, who is honoured to be called the Friend of God, *Jam.* 2. 23. and the Father of all them that Believe, or are true Christians, *Rom.* 4. 11. It is God's express Character, *Gen.* 18. 19. I know him, that he will Command his Children and his Household after

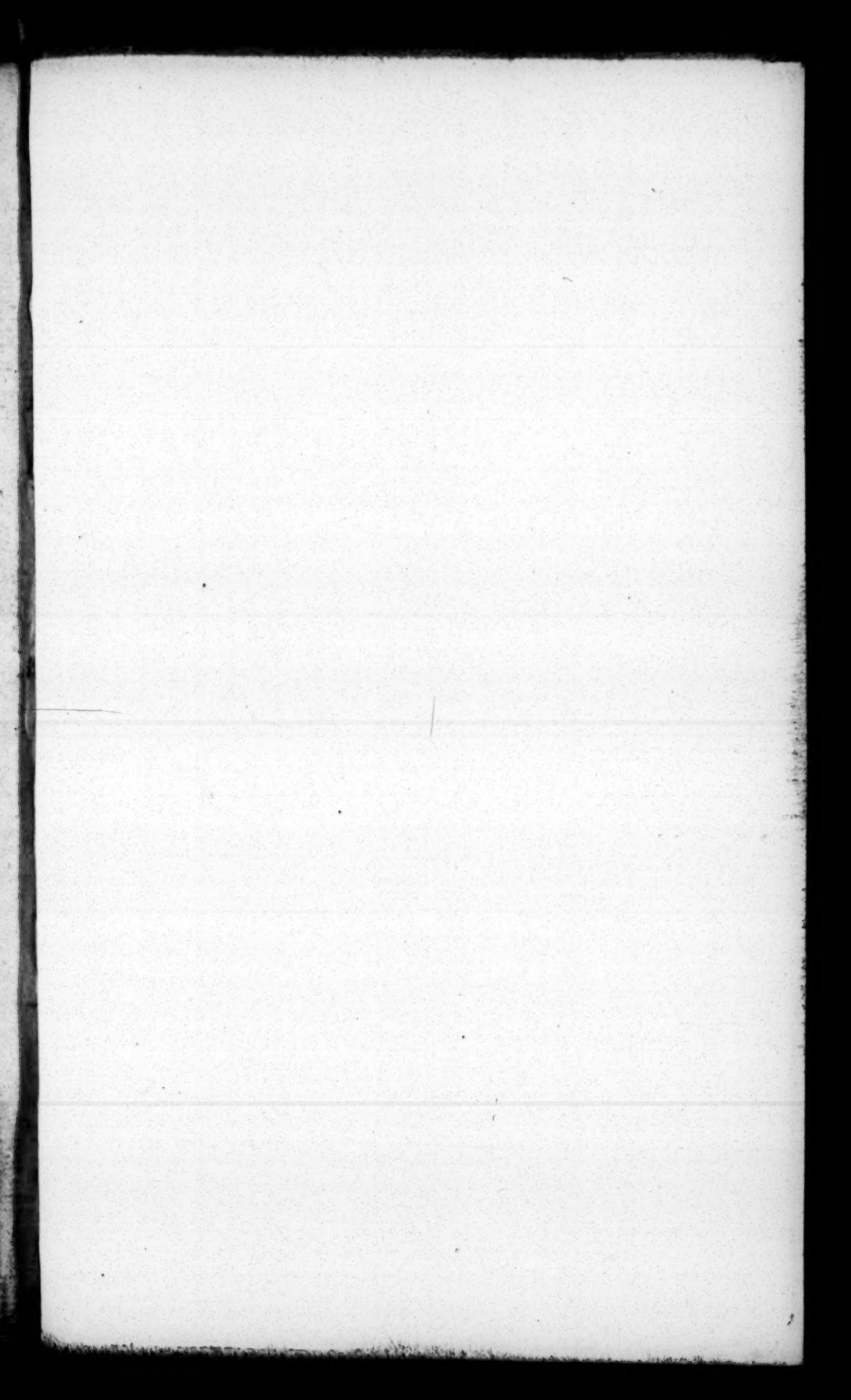
after him to keep the Way of the Lord; and therefore they wanted not his Instructions of them, nor his Prayers with and for them. I doubt not the same might be said of *Isaac* and *Jacob*. *Joshua's* Resolution is, As for me and my House we will Serve the Lord, *Josh. 24. 15*. *David's* is more particular and full, *Psal. 101*. *Cornelius* feared and worshipped God with all his House, *Act. 10. 2*. They were all of a Mind, they would have no wicked People Dwell with them, but as near as they could would have all that belonged to them to be Servants of the Living God. Now to conclude, would Men but endeavour to follow the Steps of these Saints, so beloved of God; would they approve themselves the true Children of *Abraham*, as they would Inherit his Blessing in Re-forming themselves, and Commanding their Children and their Households to keep the Way of the Lord, O happy Nation should we be! Then would Righteous Men Rejoice, and all Iniquity would stop her Mouth, *Psal. 107. 42*. Then, if ever, would Men set under their own Vines, and under their own Fig-Trees, in Peace, and Bless the Lord, *1 King. 4. 25*.

The E N D 7 DE 55

ERRATA.

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The E N D 7 DE 65

E R R A T A.

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